



PURDUE NORTH CENTRAL STUDENT WRITING

PORTALS

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**PURDUE NORTH CENTRAL
STUDENT WRITING**

PORTALS

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Foreword

This year's *Portals* is the third edition — we hope a firmly-established tradition by now — and it remains as the only student literary publication in the entire Purdue University system. On behalf of the judging committee, comprised of faculty and students, I express my thanks to all those students whose entries made this journal and the Goliard writing contest once again possible. I know that my colleagues, as well as other professionals in all fields of endeavor, share with me the firm conviction that one of the important by-products of a good education is the acquired ability to express oneself effectively in writing. We are indeed pleased to discover that so many PNC students are serious about expressing themselves well.

Our method of judging was similar to that used for previous editions: each judge independently read all the entries and by means of a numerical scale evaluated each selection on the bases of writing excellence — precision of thought and expression, clarity, ease of style, and technical skill. A total of point scores determined the winners and honorable mentions in each of the two contest divisions. The Freshman Contest consisted of entries written as required assignments by students enrolled in Freshman English courses at PNC; and the Open Contest consisted of entries submitted by students from the PNC student body at large.

The anonymity of the entries again produced unusual results. In the Freshman Contest one entrant won two awards, and in the Open Contest two entrants won two awards each while a third entrant won three awards.

Several other interesting results of this year's contest distinguish it from contests of previous years, the most important of which is that among the winners there were thirteen women and five men. Second, while the voting on many entries was extremely close, all winners came from only four schools — Technology, Agriculture, Community College, and HSSE. Two winners are not as yet classified. Third, the top three prizes in the Freshman Contest were all won by student nurses in the School of Technology. Fourth, and perhaps most gratifying, is that the winning entries represent a wide selection of subject matter.

Practical considerations of space once again determined how many papers could be included in the journal. Honorable Mention goes to several whose papers are not included.

Hal Phillips, Director
Student Writing Contest

JUDGES: Professor John Stanfield, Acting Chairman, English Department; Dr. June Bostich, Professor Barbara Lootens, Mr. Hal Phillips, Dr. Roger Schlobin; Miss Linda Calusa, Mr. David Maule.

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FRESHMAN CONTEST

First Prize Winner:

IT ALWAYS HAPPENS TO THE OTHER GUY

It always happens to the other guy. Is that not true? The man next door was killed in an auto accident. The thirty-six hour old baby of your best friend died because of a heart defect. Your husband's boss got a divorce. The girl down the street was raped while waiting for a train. Bad things, horrible things, sickening things always happen to someone else. Few people realize that, to the other guy, *you* are the other guy. I didn't realize it.

The first time I saw Shanna I knew that I would love her no matter what happened. Shanna was saved from being a bloody mass in a hospital wastebasket by a two week period. Rubella had come silently and swiftly before I knew I was pregnant. By the time I found out that I was pregnant, it was too late to do anything about the possibilities, percentages, and the probabilities. I carried Shanna and fear on the inside for the next six months. Outside I carried my head up and quoted the percentages and facts that proved that the other guy was the one who needed to think about the March of Dimes, the Easter Seal Foundation, and agencies to help deformed and handicapped children. I certainly didn't need them.

When I had my baby, she would be fine. She had to come home. I had everything ready. The used crib which we painted pink had stood in the corner like a monument for months. We had done the painting against everyone's better judgment. The flowered wallpaper, more wasted than I got on the wall, looked great. Everything and everyone waited.

She was born on a cold October morning. She made me the most happy eighteen-year-old mother in the world. She was bald, beautiful and basic, with all the necessary parts. Every arm, leg, eyeball, and lung was there. All fears were unwarranted.

Within twenty-four hours she had broken out with Rubella and had to be isolated. I was told that this was probably the only reason that she had not been born deformed. She had carried in her body the germs that could have caused her severe deformity. The temperature that I had when I was sick was enough to do all the things that I had feared would happen. I had shown everyone that those things never happen to you. Those things always happen to others.

I took Shanna home at three weeks of age and weighing a robust five pounds, one-half ounce. She was an angel child. She didn't cry. She didn't get sick. She never fussed. She walked early and got her teeth late. She blew bubbles and cooed for hours on end. I really had a miracle child.

Shanna was the best child I had ever seen. She was, in fact, almost too good to be true. None of my friends had children as good as Shanna. I

could take her anywhere and not worry about her crying the whole time. It bothered me, though, that she was slow to talk. She was over a year old and had never said a thing. She did not ever try to copy me when I talked to her. She did coo and smile when I talked to her, but not one word had ever crossed her lips. I was not overly worried because I had no reason to believe that she was anything except slow to talk. Some children are just slow to catch up.

One day the shock came that sent me running to the doctor. I was cleaning my kitchen cabinets and had every pot and pan that I owned out on the counter-top. My cat Taboo decided to jump up on the counter to get a better look at what I was doing and proceeded to knock everything off the counter. I had a linoleum floor, and the noise turned my insides to jelly. I whirled to grab my baby. The poor frightened child I knew would be crying and screaming in fear. The realization hit me as soon as I grabbed for the infant seat. She sat cooing and smiling as before. She was oblivious to the sound. She was not upset or frightened. She didn't know what was going on. "She's retarded! She's retarded! She's got brain damage! She's retarded!" Those thoughts screamed through my head. I had to call my doctor.

He let me in right away because I was on the verge of hysteria. He tried to assure me that it was an isolated incident and it couldn't prove that she was retarded. Even if she were, maybe it was minimal. My emotional state caused my doctor to arrange an appointment at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

The morning I left for that appointment was beautiful and warm, and it represented an omen to me. I would hurry there and get this ordeal over with. They could run their tests and fix whatever was wrong, if anything, and then I could get back home again. Shanna would be all right. Defects and deformities simply did not happen to children who have parents that love and want them as much as we loved and wanted Shanna. Anyway, whatever was wrong could be fixed if they did find something.

I reached Chicago at 8:00 that morning and checked Shanna into the hospital. I left and went to the nearest hotel to get a room for my two nights without Shanna. Then I went back to the hospital and spent the rest of the morning drinking coffee in the cafeteria. At noon they called me to Shanna's room and I found seven doctors at her bedside. Dr. Roberts introduced me to them and explained each field of diagnosis that was being considered. I found that each doctor had special tests to run and that Shanna would be able to go home as soon as the results were determined.

I spent the rest of the day and evening at the hospital and then I went to the hotel. I spent a sleepless night telling myself how silly I was, and

how I should get some patterns and start some new winter clothes for her. After all, kids grow fast. Everything would be all right in a couple of days and I'd be home doing all this before I knew it.

I left the hotel early and had breakfast. Then I went to Lincoln Park to take a walk. I needed to kill some time. The doctors had said not to bother to come to the hospital too early as she would be busy with her tests. I sat on a bench in the park and watched the children. I tried to imagine how many of them had had something wrong with them and how easily it had been corrected. There must have been a hundred children there, and I picked out ninety diseases that had been cured by the time the kids were two years old. Of course, everything was all right so far as Shanna was concerned.

At noon I walked back to the hospital. The testing was done for that day and there were only three tests to be completed the next morning. Dr. Roberts said he would see me at three o'clock the next afternoon to discuss the results of the tests and any future plans, if needed.

The rest of the day we played games and I looked at the other children who had easily visible deformities. They were ugly and crippled and disgusting. They were retarded and pitiful. They were revolting and terminal. I was very glad that Shanna and I were there for only a couple of days. I did not want her exposed to that sort of thing. I mean, these kids weren't right and there was really nothing wrong with her. I couldn't understand what had upset me enough to bring her here in the first place. After the next afternoon we could go home and forget all about this place.

That night I walked back to my room and spent that whole night thinking about what I had to do with Shanna. She probably just needed me to spend a little more time reading to her and exposing her to more sound and voice. She would probably catch up in no time.

At three o'clock that last afternoon I climbed the stairs to the third floor and tried to get rid of the lump in my throat. My palms were so sweaty that I found it hard to hold on to my purse. I kept walking until I got to Annex B. This ordeal was almost over.

I opened the door and started down the hall. Under normal circumstances the hall was about four feet wide and thirty feet long. That day it was two feet wide and thirty miles long with no exit. I felt trapped. I reached Dr. Roberts' door, but I could not open it.

Dr. Roberts must have heard me coming because he opened the door and helped me to my seat. I sat down with my heart in my throat. I could hardly breathe. The buzzers buzzed in my ears and the top of my head floated. My whole body changed temperature from hot to cold and back again. He opened his mouth, and as the words started to come out I prayed, "Please Lord!"

“Shanna is not retarded. Her EEG is normal. She has normal eyes and above average intelligence. Her heart murmur is almost gone and her skeletal framework is fine. All of her blood work is good. She has no allergies or respiratory problems. Her nervous system and reflexes are good. However...”

I had no need to hear anymore. I was so happy. I scolded myself for having come here and wasted so much of this man’s valuable time. I knew from the beginning, after all, that there was nothing wrong. Things that happened to those other parents just couldn’t happen to me. I listened so hard to all the good things that I almost missed the last two words he spoke: “. . .she’s deaf.”

—MAUREEN KAY SCHNEEGAS

Maureen Kay Schneegas lives at 4008 Phoebe Lane, Valparaiso. She is married, has three children, and is a full-time student at PNC in her first year of nurse’s training.

Second Prize winner:

ON CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

In his essay *Civil Disobedience* Henry David Thoreau likens the government to a great machine with many cogs and pulleys. As in all machines, Thoreau admits that this machine of American government has its due amount of friction and that perhaps in time it will wear smooth. Thoreau adds, however, that if the friction is of such nature as to cause us to be agents of injustice to other men, we cannot allow the friction just to wear smooth. He puts it well when he writes, “Let your life be a counterfriction to stop the machine. What I have to do is to see, at any rate, that I do not lend myself to the wrong which I condemn.”

One must smile to think of Thoreau condemning the machine of American government with its impersonal and detached posture. Are the days of Thoreau not those same days of which we wistfully say, “good” and “old” and “things were so simple then?” Would that Thoreau could cast his eye on the machine today! How it has grown in a hundred years! There are a thousand new cogs and pulleys, more intricate and complex in function than our poor Thoreau could ever have imagined.

I do not profess to be an expert in such fields as government or history, nor do I lay claim to an understanding of the details of political science. But I am an American, an American who has spent many quite hours examining thoughts and experiences, analyzing the feelings I have toward my country. Like Thoreau, I see the government as a machine. It seems, though, that the ill-working parts of this monstrous ma-

chine have not worn smooth nor have they been brought to a halt even in more than a century. Instead, new and smaller machines have been created to counter-balance the evil of the original, bigger machine until today we can see a thousand smaller cogs correcting and compensating for the flaws in the larger. There are no longer men to operate the machine, because the machine controls men. It has grown into an ugly and brutal thing, and I see it consuming itself like some kind of deadly cancer.

Some would be taken aback at such an attitude, I know. Let me say that it is not with any hatred or bitterness that I view this government, but only with a sincere desire to detach myself from it as much as is reasonably possible to protect myself and become as indifferent toward the machine as it has become toward all of us. In my mind, these thoughts are well grounded.

I have seen my government only through a television screen or on the front pages of morning newspapers. Images flash through my mind, bits of newsreel. Burning buses in the South, a beautiful day beneath the Washington Monument, a speech that made my mother cry, "I have a dream." A classroom television set clicked on in the corner, teacher sobbing, John Kennedy had been shot. Martin Luther King falling on a motel balcony. Blood in Chicago in 1968; Bobby Kennedy slumped to the floor, an aide cried, "My God, he's been shot!" The cover of *Time* pictured the silhouette of a young girl bending over a body. Allison Krause had been killed "on a grassy knoll" at Kent State. Thousands of kids, a few my friends, were kicked and maced and jailed in Washington.

All of this and more in my short lifetime. It leaves me numbed, and I can only shrug an indifferent shoulder to the Irvin Committee, Daniel Ellsberg and his psychiatrist, and eighteen minutes of blank tape. The machine is losing its hold, not through the dedicated demonstrations of sincere Americans, but through its own self-destructive, self-consuming nature.

I choose only to wash my hands of it, so far as is possible. It matters little to me whether the Energy Crisis is real or concocted. It matters only how I can best deal with it. The dollar is of little worth, so I detach myself from it and deal with dollars only as is necessary. The government neither benefits nor harms me, and I am indifferent to it. I can respect men. I can even respect those institutions which touch my life, and I do. I cannot respect a machine. Likewise I cannot show any disrespect to it, for the machine means a great deal to many people whom I do respect. I can only dismiss it and live my life day to day as I see fit.

—BARBARA STAFFELD

Barbara Staffeld is married and lives at R.R. #1, Wanatah. She graduated from PNC in June with a degree in nursing.

THE UNDERRATED SIGNIFICANCE OF LANDSCAPE
OR PHYSICAL SURROUNDINGS

Stories need to be stimulating enough to retain the interest of the reader. The author may use many tools to keep the audience entranced. One of the various tools, often disregarded, is the author's ability to reflect mood of character or atmosphere of place by correlating them with the physical environment (as a precursor) to achieve emotional involvement of the reader. Descriptions often contain references which allow the reader some possible insight to the character's future mood or actions.

As to the amount of detailed description of landscape or physical surroundings much depends upon when the stories were written. Therefore the easiest examination of emotional stimulation through the physical is through its development within a chronological sequence. Within the myths, there are only a few isolated examples of this technique. *The Mabinogion* has the least amount of development. Descriptions of the appearance of a character's weapons or mode of transportation are more likely to be detailed and used to represent or parallel a character's traits. Culhwich's horse is described as being "shell-hoofed" and having a canter "exceeding light". This fine animal is a parallel to his youthful rider. The potential hero is worthy of his outstanding steed.

The use of topology is almost nonexistent in *The Mabinogion*, but *Beowulf* has profited the most by its application. The creator of *Beowulf* has exercised his ability to produce an effective portrayal of places through his intricate descriptions. Although he executes this technique more effectively than does the author of *The Mabinogion*, he still does not use it extensively. The description of Heorot Hall as "tall, high, and wide-gables" gives an evaluation of size and strength, which may parallel Hrothgar's company of thanes. As is the building, so are those who dwell within: strong and resistant to outside influences. The view of the future destruction of the mead hall by flames indicates that although the *Comitades* is strong, it too may fall to potential ruin at a later date (fulfilled by the arrival of Grendel and his assault on Hrothgar's men).

The best use of topology for emotional effect within *Beowulf* is Grendel's mother's pool. The mere generates a feeling of the unnatural which is also true of its dwellers. Hrothgar and his men "found mountain trees leaning over the heavy stone, a joyless wood: water lay beneath, bloody and troubled." The pool bears a resemblance to two different types of hell. One type, seen in the description of the mere, would be the Scandinavian ice hell. "... over it [pool] hang frost covered woods," and "Then they saw on the water many a snake-shape, strong sea-serpents exploring the mere. . . ." The frost and snake-forms comprise the elements of an

Icelandic Hell. The “surging” and “boiling” of the water may remind one of the “heat” associated with our traditionally fiery hell. Both hells are the representation of homes of evil forces. The repulsiveness of the pool is further reinforced by “the surging waves [that] rise up black to the heavens when the wind stirs up awful storms, until the air becomes gloomy, the skies weep.” Beowulf’s bravery is magnified at this point, because he is the only man willing to enter the troubled waters. If the description of the pool were not so vivid and precise, the tension surrounding the entrance would not be nearly so great.

The author uses topology to show that the evil had been removed from the pool by the death of the mother. After her death, “the blaze brightened, light shone within, just as from the sky heaven’s candle shines clear.” When Beowulf returned from the underwater cave, “the currents were all cleaned. . . .” As the evil of Grendel and his mother had been eliminated, so were the elements that represented evil surrounding the pool. As we have seen, they were replaced by “light” and “cleansing” which represent new-found redemption and the removal of the evil. The reader can thereby achieve the understanding that the monsters will no longer pose a threat to Hrothgar, and the tension is relieved.

The *Kalevala*, last of the three myths, uses the same technique in some instances to create the tension seen in *Beowulf*. It contains a parallel to *Beowulf*’s hellish mere. Again the author has achieved through detailed description an evil atmosphere surrounding a place. North Pohjola may be interpreted by the reader as another Icelandic hell. When the three heroes travel to Pohjola, they find a “cold and dreary village” in the “misty land of Pohja.” With Lemminkainen’s journey to Pohjola, he finds the entrance to be “a fence [that] was raised of iron, in the ground a hundred fathoms, in the sky a hundred fathoms” and “thus the fence with snakes was wattled.” Again are found the two elements of cold and serpents which will give the reader insight to the evil that the heroes will find within the residents of Pohjola.

Within this particular myth, the landscape is not only described but personified as well in some episodes to exaggerate the presence of emotion in a situation. One example that reveals both techniques is seen in Kullervo’s return to the spot in the forest where he had seduced his sister. The spot is filled with sadness and grief: “There the tender grass was weeping, and the flowers of heath were grieving. . . . Neither was the young grass spouting, nor the flowers of heath expanding, nor the spot had covered over, where the evil thing had happened. . . and the mother’s child dishonored.” Just as Kullervo’s evil act had brought an end to his sister’s honor and life, so had it stopped the spot from flourishing. The weeping and lamenting of the grass and flowers intensify the feeling of sadness because of the lost honor. Through no fault of the sister or the

landscape had the evil act been committed, yet both must suffer the result of the destruction of good. Kullervo has already been saddened by the death of his mother. The spot inflicts more despair upon him than he can tolerate and he kills himself because of his sorrow and shame. Here, evil has not only destroyed the elements of good, but itself as well.

If the authors of the myths are capable of achieving desired effects through the development of the physical surrounding, the authors of the romances must be considered masters of this skill. The romances more than myths contain use of the topology as guides to character interpretation. Almost every page involves reference to character, personality or mood, or atmosphere of place, through parallels involving landscapes or detailed explanation of the place (especially Malory).

The romances use topology to intensify existing emotional feelings. In "Perceval," when the boy saw the tent in the meadow, he was not sure what it was but felt it was God's house that his mother had told him about earlier. This was because it was so "wonderfully beautiful. . .and that the whole meadow was brightened by the brilliance of the tent." With the description of such a rich and noble tent, the actions of Perceval appear worse than had the scene taken place at the home of the shepherd or farmer. The insult perpetrated by Perceval upon the gentle lady magnifies his ignorance of proper customs and his misunderstanding of the words of his mother.

Castles were used frequently in "Perceval" to reflect the people who reside within their walls. The description of Gornemant's castle is "strong and fair. The castle was finely situated and well-furnished within." A parallel is established between the castle and its owner. We learn by Gornemant's actions and words that he is as fair and noble as his castle. He is described by his niece as "a noble and gracious host, powerful and prosperous."

The castle of Gornemant's niece does not fare so well: "Outside the walls there was nothing but sea and water and ravaged fields," and "a bridge so feeble that he doubted whether it would hold up under him." Perceval found the inside no better: ". . .he found the streets empty and the old houses tumbled down. . . the walls were cracked and the towers roofless and the gates open both night and day." The author informs his audience that the people of the castle are troubled and that circumstances are not as they should be. The people, it is learned, are being besieged by Angiumgueron. Just as in *Beowulf*, the description of the buildings are not only to show the physical condition of the place, but the condition of the residents as well.

Another type of building, besides castles, that is found in "Perceval" is a hermitage. The dwelling is located in a forest, but the way is easily found. When a hermitage is seen, it should be realized that it is a place

of safety, warmth, and refuge for the lost (spiritually or physically). Although the truth is spoken in a hermitage, the characters do not always understand and can leave the hermitage with as little sense of direction or guidance as when they arrived. In Perceval's case the holy man reveals the facts surrounding questions that are not only in Perceval's mind, but in the reader's mind as well. The reader also gains knowledge from a hermitage. Here the sin of Perceval is exposed, and the reason he did not speak when he saw the lance and the Holy Grail is understood.

The story of "Perceval" begins in the forest where his mother's manor is located. The forest separates Perceval from the outside world. He remains ignorant to any other way of life except the "lonely" forest that would make "his heart rejoice at the sweet season and at hearing the warbling of the birds." He was "filled with the sweetness of the calm weather." The forest reflects his oblivion to the world beyond the perimeters of his mother's home. Here there is a simple way of life, with no confusions or contradictions to invade his innocent mind. This changes when the young boy learns about the knights from King Arthur's court. When he is leaving his mother's manor, he enters the "great dark forest" which is a representation of the unknown world the boy is heading towards.

There it is shown that the boy and the forest have both changed. This situation could be looked upon as an Edenic state. Both the pre-Edenic and post-Edenic periods are present in the episode. The pre-Edenic is seen in the naive, unknowing Perceval. The knights represent the fall of the Edenic state, and after this he must leave his haven because of the knowledge he has gained (post-Edenic) and journey into the unknown.

"Tristan and Isolt," also found in *Medieval Romances*, contains an Edenic garden which has much greater detail than Perceval's forest. The Love Grotto is found within a forest, but does not involve the forest as a whole as seen in the story of "Perceval." Every segment of description has meaning that intensifies the atmosphere of the Love Grotto. During the period before the fall, the reader can feel all the emotional awareness of love through the description of the cavern. The "round, wide and lofty" description gives the size and height that love can achieve. The "snow-white and smooth" walls represent love's purity. The "crown richly wrought in metal work and adorned with gems" could be a parallel to love's richness, and the floor "of polished marble" is the achievement of constancy or the durability of love. The "hue green as grass" is love's ability to flourish. The perfection of love can be seen in the "couch carved out of a crystal stone." The light is the presence of honor that accompanies love, and the three windows that it shines through represent the virtues necessary for the light to appear. The "brazen doors" close out everything except love. Completeness is shown by the three linden trees

(three being the symbol of completeness). Nothing else is necessary when love is present.

.....

The descriptions in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* are constructed more in a likeness to “Perceval” than “Tristan and Isolt.” This romance has descriptions of castles and courts as in “Perceval,” but the topological details are not to the extent of those in “Tristan and Isolt.” As was true with *The Mabinogion*, more detail and exactness is given to the character’s own appearance, his weapons, and mode of transportation.

The games that Sir Gawain takes part in require him to journey to the home of the Green Knight in one year. Through the description of the land he travels, the reader can sympathize with his loneliness and uncertainty. He journeys “over country wild and strange.” “Many a cliff he must climb in country wild,” never sure of what lies behind “the rocks” or “jagged steeps.” Worse than the mountains and terrain is the winter weather. The loneliness is more intense “when the cold, clean rain rushed from the clouds and froze before it could fall to the frosty earth.” It is difficult enough for Gawain to brave the strange land alone, but the cold and hostile weather adds more to the picture of a troubled knight far from his native environment.

Gawain is relieved when he comes upon “a wondrous dwelling. . .a castle as comely as a knight could own, on grounds fair and green. . .”

The man on his mount remained on the bank
Of the deep double moat that defended the place.
The wall went in the water wondrous deep,
And a long way aloft it loomed overhead.
It was built of stone blocks to the battlement’s height,
With corbels under cornices in comeliest style;
Watch-towers trusty protected the gate,
With many a lean loophole, to look from within:
A better-made barbican the knight beheld never.
And behind it there hove a great hall and fair:
Turrets rising in tiers, with tines at their tops,
Spires set beside them, splendidly long,
With finials well-fashioned, as filigree fine.
Chalk-white chimneys over chambers high
Gleamed in gay array upon gables and roofs;
The pinnacles in panoply, pointing in air,
So vied there for his view that verily it seemed
A castle cut of paper for a king’s feast.

This is the most detailed description of place in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

.....

The wastelands represent the fruitless journey of the knights who are spiritually lost. Nothing physical flourishes here just as there is nothing spiritual that grows within the knights. Most “rode random in the wasteland.” Without direction and without clear understanding of the purpose of the quest of the Holy Grail, except as an earthly achievement, these were the knights “too impatient or too proud” to realize their sin. “As a result they wandered only into wastelands.” From the wastelands, the reader can associate the feelings of failure and doom with the knights who roam there because of their lack of knowledge and understanding.

.....

In contrast with all the moving descriptions of topology found in the romances that have already been mentioned, *The Green Knight* has no need for full descriptions of any kind. Landscape development is not necessary to further mood or intentions because of the directness of the narrative. Anything that need be understood is openly expressed. Therefore the meaning is stated and not implied in any subtle manner. No one must guess why things are happening because it is stated that “it was through witchcraft and no other that she [Agostes] dealt with all.” There is no description of Sir Bredbeddle’s journey to the Greene Chappel because the location does not have to be determined through topology and sounds. This story simply states “he saw it stand under a hill.” And towards the end the Green Knight tells Gawaine, “to have slain thee was never my thought.” Both knights return to Arthur’s court and knight-hood has thus become united.

The use of descriptive topology indeed increases as the years pass. The earlier writers of the myths did not use landscape descriptions to the same extent as the romance writers (except, of course, for *The Green Knight*). Whenever the authors use topology, this technique certainly adds to and/or parallels the understanding of present actions or moods of characters. Landscape should be observed carefully to achieve real satisfaction from our readings.

—MARGUERITE PINKERTON

Marguerite Pinkerton, who lives at 306 Glendale Blvd., Valparaiso, is a full-time student enrolled at PNC and is in her second year of nurse’s training. This article is a portion of her originally longer work.

THE DECISION

A biologist would probably say that it takes years for a boy to become a man. His body and mind must grow and develop and make the necessary transition from child to adult. But I say that some boys never grow into men and there are others who become men in one split second of decision. That’s what happened to me.

It was in the summer of 1960. I was twelve years old and had just bought a new high-powered B-B gun with my paper route money. All the kids in our gang had B-B guns, but until I bought that new one, mine had been the oldest. That didn't effect my marksmanship, though; I was the best shot in the crowd and everyone conceded it. That is, everyone but Burt.

Burt was the newest member of our gang, having moved into the neighborhood about three weeks before. He was twelve, the same as most of us, but was big and stout, with large beefy hands, huge shoulders and a thick slab of face with small pig eyes and a pinched-in mean mouth. From the first day he'd shown up, slouching insolently against our garage, he'd challenged my right as leader of the gang.

Actually, we didn't have a "gang" in a bad sense. That is, we didn't carry switchblades and run in the streets at night looking for trouble. We were mostly just a bunch of kids who played basketball together in back of the school, went skinny dipping in the summer and shot at tin cans in the ravine that ran behind my house.

We lived in a small rural town in Michigan that had only one elementary and one high school. Everyone knew what everyone else was doing, so it wasn't that easy to get into trouble, anyway. I remember one summer two boys (not part of our gang) sneaked some gasoline into the ravine and "sniffed" it. As a result, one of them died, and the community talked about it for two or three years afterwards. The gas stations quit selling gas to kids, even for their lawn mowers, without a note from their parents, and the drugstore wouldn't sell boys glue. All the merchants cooperated to enforce those rules, so, you see, it was a pretty close-knit community where kids seldom had a chance to get into trouble.

The day I got my B-B gun I hurried over to Joe's house to show it off. When I got outside, there was Burt, slouching along the sidewalk in front of my house, swinging his head from side to side and continuously looking back over his shoulder, a habit he had. He reminded me of a big, mean grizzly bear. I wasn't too happy to see him. He didn't "fit in" with the rest of our gang. He'd come from a pretty rough section of Chicago, where knifings, mean drunks, and police raids were common goings-on. His dad was dead and his mother was almost an alcoholic, so he was pretty much on his own. Because our town was too quiet and too dull to suit him, he was always restlessly in search of some excitement.

As soon as he spotted me he hurried over to inspect my new B-B gun, then tagged along to Joe's house. We made a funny looking pair: Burt slouching along, all big and bulky and forever looking back over his shoulder; me kind of small and skinny and walking straight as a ramrod because my folks had preached posture to me since I was two years old.

Tommy and "Stick", a couple of guys in our gang, were already at Joe's when we got there, so we all decided to go into the ravine and target shoot awhile.

Burt had been eyeing my gun enviously. "Bet I can shoot that better than you," he stated.

This met with hoots from the other guys. "Nobody can shoot better than Craig," they claimed.

"How do you know? You've never seen me shoot," Burt countered.

"Let Burt shoot your gun, Craig," the guys pleaded. "Show him who's the best shot."

"Sure, why not?" I said as we headed towards the ravine. There was a tight knot forming in the pit of my stomach. I wasn't scared that Burt would beat me, so why was I so uptight?

In the ravine we started to line up some beer cans. Burt laughed scornfully. "My little sister can shoot tin cans. If you're as good as you say you are, you won't be scared to shoot at a moving object."

We all stopped still and looked at him inquiringly.

"Like what?" I asked cautiously.

Burt looked around him: at the underbrush, at the trees, at the kids gathered expectantly around. Then he looked at me. He just stood there, cocksure of himself, and stared at me, challenge written all over his body — not just challenge of markmanship, but challenge of leadership as well — and maybe even more than that.

"How about, like a bird?" he finally asked with a thin, mean smile.

"The people who live around here won't like it if we shoot birds," I hedged.

"So who's going to tell them?" he countered, mockingly emphasizing each word. He gave each kid there a searching glance, and each kid in turn mumbled, "Not me," and lowered his eyes. They were mostly in awe of Burt because of his size and big-city background. Finally Burt swung back to me.

"Well?" he questioned. "Are you chicken to shoot a bird?"

I hesitated and in that moment I was lost. For if I'd taken my stand immediately as leader and refused to shoot birds, probably the rest of the gang would have backed me. But in hesitating I gave Burt the upper hand. He was the decisive one; I was not, and the power subtly switched to him. The gang of boys, in their dependence on a leader, placed their allegiance with the strongest person. In my moment of uncertainty Burt was that person. He knew it, too; I could tell by the triumphant gleam in his eyes. Without a battle, without any resistance from me, he had taken my place as leader of the gang.

The kids were all watching me closely. Not just my leadership, but the respect of the fellows was dependent upon my next actions. I would

either earn the right to keep it or I would lose it irrevocably. Slowly, purposefully, I loaded my rifle. "Show me the bird," I said.

"Up there!" Burt pointed and I followed his gaze to the top of a giant red oak.

I knew as soon as I saw the bird that I shouldn't shoot it. It was a redbird, perched far out on a slender limb, its head thrown back and chirping. Every feeling a man can ever feel about the joy of living was reflected in its song.

"There," Burt repeated. "Can't you see it? The redbird in the top of that oak tree.

"I see it." I glanced at the boys gathered around me. Each and every one of them was watching me with gleeful anticipation. Reluctantly I raised the gun to my shoulder and sighted along the barrel. There was no murmur of protest behind me. In fact, some of the boys whispered encouragement. "Show 'em, Craig." "Don't miss, buddy." I tried to summon some enthusiasm, but all I could feel was sickening shame. It was as if that tiny bird had grown to mountainous proportions, as if that tiny bird singing on that swaying limb had become a symbol of everything free and beautiful and good.

Suddenly the bird sensed a danger. Its song ended with a questioning chirp as it hopped about on the limb, looking to the left and right, up and down. Then, apparently satisfied, it tipped back its head and once more offered its joyous song to the heavens. The pounding of my heart kept time with its song. I realized then that I could not kill it.

"Shoot or give me the gun," Burt demanded, impatiently reaching for my rifle. I shook him off, wiped my palms dry on my trousers, and took careful aim — far enough above the bird to miss it, but close enough to scare it — and very slowly I pulled the trigger.

With a startled thrust the redbird shot upward, fluttered through the leaves, and soared away, alive and free to sing again. I stood there, feeling big as God, and watched my boyhood fly away.

A disappointed murmur arose behind me but, by some intuition unexplained by our sciences, Burt had immediately guessed the truth.

"You missed it on purpose," he accused. "You deliberately scared it away so I couldn't get a shot." He turned to the other boys for verification and support. "You guys saw it. He shot way over its head. He was chicken to shoot it and chicken to give me a shot."

There was an uncomfortable silence. It was obvious by the disappointed, reproachful looks on the boys' faces that they had no doubts but that Burt was right in his accusations. I suppose I should have been flattered by their faith in my marksmanship, but at that moment I was still too full of that strange new feeling of power.

I was aware of their animosity, their disapproving withdrawal. I, their

leader, had failed them and, egged on by Burt, they were ready to turn on me. As I listened to their derisive laughter a remarkable realization struck me. Their taunts couldn't hurt me!

The gang seemed to sense the change in me, my calm self-assurance, for gradually a quiet descended which Burt finally broke in a belligerent, almost whining voice. "We don't need any chickens in our gang, right guys?"

The fellows shuffled their feet, glancing uncertainly from Burt to me. My attitude puzzled them and they couldn't decide what it meant. I'm sure they couldn't have realized (as, indeed, neither had I yet) that in that moment I had stepped from the ranks of boy to those of man. However, the very unexpected strangeness of my attitude commanded their respect; some basic instinct in them demanded they defer to the man in me.

I smiled (a very condescending smile, I'm afraid) and, in a patient, even voice, as a teacher would talk to a class of very young students, I explained, "I missed my shot simply because I did not want that bird to die."

I pointed towards the sky. The bird could still be seen, a tiny red ruby flying free against a blue velvet backdrop. There was nothing I could say to add to that picture. The boys, by some miracle of nature or age, and still under the influence of my transformation, all nodded wisely. For them, at that moment, letting the bird live was the only thing a sensible person could do.

Burt started to bluster, but with no encouragement from the others, the words died in his throat. Something had happened which he had missed and he looked so completely baffled that, in my new manhood, I actually felt a stab of pity for him.

With one final, sweeping glance at the boys I turned my back on them and walked away. They hesitated a moment. Then, with humble respect, they followed me home.

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MARK TWAIN'S EMPHASIS ON THE INDIVIDUAL WORD

For many years literary critics assumed that Mark Twain, without regard for careful planning, simply composed spontaneously.¹ Supposedly, the author of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and other classics was a methodless writer who had few capabilities as a literary technician. "...literary art," wrote one of his contemporaries, "was foreign to Mark

Twain's nature."² Twain himself probably created these impressions. When questioned about his writing style, Twain responded: ". . .I am not sure I have methods in composition".³ But Twain, the humorist, also asserted: ". . .I never had any leaning toward literature, nor any desire to meddle with it...."⁴ Despite the opinion held by many of Twain's critics and his own seemingly anti-literary views, Twain did not ignore formulas of composition. He was very much interested in the particulars and details of language.⁵ Use of language was one area of composition in which he had definite theories. He placed great importance on the individual word, and in *Huckleberry Finn* Twain consciously used repetition to emphasize the key word. The methods he used in this novel were carefully planned.

Twain hated careless composition and demanded accuracy in all literature; he was concerned with clarity and wordiness early in his literary career. By 1875 Twain himself definitely recognized this fact: ". . .how often I do use three words where one would answer — a thing I am always trying to guard against."⁶ To avoid unnecessary word usage Twain deliberately searched for the one word that meant precisely what he wanted to say. This key was the difference between good literature and slovenly literature, between accuracy and inaccuracy. Twain was very clear on this point as is evident in his following observation: ". . .the difference between the *almost right* word and the right word is really a large matter — it's the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning."⁷ In Twain's literary formula, the right word was an ". . .elusive and shifty grain of gold. . . . A powerful agent is the right word," he explained. "It lights the reader's way and makes it plain; a close approximation to it will answer, and much traveling is done in a well-enough fashion by its help, but we do not welcome it and applaud it and rejoice in it as we do when *the* right one blazes out on us. . . ."⁸

Twain was concerned with the use of the key word to clarify and explain both in his works and in the works of others. In his essay about Fenimore Cooper's *The Deerslayer*, Twain was especially critical of Cooper's choice of words. Cooper, according to Twain, used vague, unclear words in place of the accurate one, the right word. The result was the same as singing off-key.⁹ Emphasis on the key word always remained an essential part of Twain's writing style. On the same day he made his last will, Twain also wrote "Now, I have got a word for it when 'purring' is a shade too strong to properly describe that almost undetectable soft rumbling sound, which you feel rather than hear, when you press a kitten to your ear. I pressed the kitten to Clara's ear and said, 'There — now you can hear him *smoldering*.'"¹⁰ When it came to this special point of "literary art", the use of words, Twain certainly was not the methodless writer he was believed to be.

Twain used various technical devices to emphasize the key words. He carefully used repetition to stress the meaning of the individual word. Once again, Twain had precise theories dealing with this detail of composition: “. . .tautology cannot scare me, anyway. . . Some folks are so afraid of a little repetition that they make their meaning vague, when they could just as well make it clear, if only their ogre were out of the way.”¹¹ Twain praised the Germans because they were not afraid to repeat the right word. Americans, however, generally replaced the right word with an inaccurate one for fear of sounding improper. “Repetition may be bad,” he wrote, “but surely inexactness is worse.”¹²

Although he was not afraid to repeat the key word, Twain was critical of unnecessary usage: “I do not find that repetition of an important word a few times — say three or four times — in a paragraph troubles my ear if clearness of meaning is best secured thereby. But tautological repetition which has no justifying object, but merely exposes the fact that the writer’s balance at the vocabulary bank has run short. . .that is another matter.”¹³ To his skilled ear needless repetition sounded “as unpleasantly noticeable as a false note in music.”¹⁴

Repetition, like the key word, produced the precision Twain demanded. It was therefore only natural to combine them to reinforce the end product. In view of Twain’s remarks about repetition and the right word, one may conclude that the combination was not an accident. He made a critical, conscious effort to balance the two; superfluous repetition of the key word encumbered the passage. Careful use of repetition, however, created the effect he desired. In *Huckleberry Finn* Twain used several forms of repetition to emphasize the right word. His description of Pap Finn is an example of extended repetition of a single adjective: “It was all BLACK, no GRAY; so was his mixed-up whiskers. There warn’t no color in his face, where his face showed; it was WHITE; not like another man’s WHITE, but a WHITE to make a body sick, a WHITE to make a body’s flesh crawl — a tree toad WHITE, a fish-belly WHITE” [capitals added].¹⁵ Starting with “black” and “gray”, the passage moves naturally into the repetition of “white” as the description slides from darkness to light. Deliberate and extended repetition of the adjective created the accuracy Twain wanted to develop. He worked with the other parts of speech in the same manner, purposely repeating.

Twain used several other forms of repetition. The following passage illustrates three different but related techniques: “. . .the undertaker STOOPED DOWN and begun to GLIDE ALONG the wall, just his shoulders showing over the people’s heads. So he GLIDED ALONG. . . In a minute or two here comes this undertaker’s back and shoulders GLIDING ALONG the wall again; and so he GLIDED AND GLIDED around three sides of the room. . . Then he DROOPED DOWN AND

GLIDED ALONG the wall again to his place" [capitals added] (231-32). Just as the undertaker seemed to move without visible effort, so does the repetition move easily and effortlessly. As one of Twain's critics has noted, what appears to be spontaneous prose actually represents a calculated effort on Twain's part.¹⁶ Besides being an example of extended repetition of a verb, the passage also illustrates the simplest type of repetition he used: "glided and glided." Twain varied this simple form with "he run on, and on, and on" and "always moving back, and back, and back" (290,181). Closely related to both techniques are his combinations of two structurally-similar words. "Stooped down" and "drooped down" form an acceptable pair. Other examples are "groaned and moaned", "a-quaking and shaking", and "squirming and scrounging" (38, 91,184). All of these methods were frequently used to emphasize the individual word.¹⁷

Twain also combined lists of words with repetition of the conjunction "and": "I fetched meal and bacon and coffee, and coffee-pot and frying pan, and sugar and tin cups. . ."(35). Twain used this list to emphasize each noun. The nouns are like a long team of horses pulling a wagon in a parade. Each one compliments the next, but by means of the conjunction can be seen as the individual as it passes by. Repetition of the conjunction stresses each noun's meaning. Twain also used lists of verbs joined by "and" in the same manner: ". . .we slid for the cellar cupboard AND LOADED UP a good lunch AND TOOK it up to our room AND WENT TO BED, AND GOT UP about half past eleven, AND Tom PUT ON Aunt Sally's dress that he stole AND WAS GOING TO START. . ." [capitals added] (345). In this excerpt, Twain combined the conjunction with a verb eleven more times in a skillful display of his abilities as a literary technician. A close examination of the novel will show that lists, one of the least noticeable forms of repetition, were one of the most prevalent types Twain used.¹⁸

One of the more interesting techniques Twain used was his repetition of sounds. In many cases it is hard to determine if the alliteration was actually the result of a conscious process: "The frOCKS was hung. . .and a guitar-BOX in another, and all sorts of knick-knACKS around, like girls brISKen up a room with. The king said it was all the more homely and pleasanter for these FIXings. . ." [capitals added] (218). Repetition of the "eks" sound coupled with the double repetition of three vowels draws attention to each word. We have already seen that Twain determined the correct use of a word by the way it sounded; it would be odd if he did not hear the almost melodious combination of sounds in this passage.¹⁹ The next example, however, is clearly a unified version of this same technique: "Cold corn-pone, cold corn-beef, butter and butter-milk. . ." (129). An association of repeated words and sounds focuses at-

tention on each word, and at the same time, on the whole phrase. Other times the combinations are much more subtle; it appears that Twain wants the reader personally to make distinctions. Twain combined the “ea” form with the long “e” sound: “. . . long black strEAKs — rafts; sometimes you could hEAR a asEEp scrEAKing; or jumbled-up voices, it was so still, and sounds come so far; and by and by you could sEE a strEAK on the water which you know by the look of the strEAK that there’s a snag there in a swift current which brEAKs on it. . . [capitals added]” (151). In this example the predominant “e” is varied with the “e” of “hear” and the “a” of “break”. Once again, it would seem probable that this effect was the result of at least a semi-deliberate process.²⁰

Mark Twain was a careful word artist who used several forms of repetition to stress the meaning of the individual word. But it would be an overzealous exaggeration to maintain that Twain’s use of repetition was always a conscious process. Many times he failed to use his methods to their full potential. No author, however, completely recognizes all of the processes involved in his style, for style involves both the deliberate and the unconscious. But it is safe to contend that in many instances his use of repetition was deliberate and planned. Certainly, Twain deserves the title “literary artist”.²¹

NOTES

¹ Gladys Carmen Bellamy, *Mark Twain as a Literary Artist* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1950), p. 26; Bernard De Voto, *Mark Twain at Work* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), pp. 3, 52; Sydney J. Krause, “Twain’s Method and Theory of Composition,” *Modern Philology*, 56 (February 1959), 167; C. Hartley Grattan, “Mark Twain,” *American Writers on American Literature*, ed. John Macy (New York: Horace Liveright, 1931), pp. 277, 284.

² Henry M. Alden, “Mark Twain — An Appreciation,” *The Bookman*, 31 (June 1910), 367.

³ “My Methods of Writing,” *The Mark Twain Quarterly*, 8 (Winter-Spring 1949), 1.

⁴ *Mark Twain in Eruption*, ed. Bernard De Voto (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1949), p. 229.

⁵ George Feinstein, “Mark Twain’s Idea of Story Structure,” *American Literature*, 18 (1946-47), 161; Frances Guthrie Emberson, “Mark Twain’s Vocabulary: a General Survey,” *The University of Missouri Studies*, 10 (July 1, 1935), 11; Robert A. Wiggins, *Mark Twain: Jackleg Novelist* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1964), p. 44; Bernard De Voto, *Mark Twain’s America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), p. 311.

⁶ Mark Twain and William Dean Howells, *Selected Mark Twain — Howells Letters*, ed. Frederick Anderson, *et al.* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 1967), p. 61.

⁷ “My Methods of Writing,” p. 1.

⁸ *What is Man? and Other Essays*, Stormfield edition, Vol. 26 (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1929), p. 229.

⁹ *Literary Essays*, Author’s National Edition, Vol. 22 (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1907), pp. 63, 75.

¹⁰ *Mark Twain’s Notebook*, ed. Albert Bigelow Paine (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1935), p. 392.

¹¹ "Unlearnable Things," *The Atlantic Monthly*, 45 (June 1880), p. 851.

¹² *A Tramp Abroad*, Author's National Edition, Vol. 4 (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1929), p. 172.

¹³ *Mark Twain's Autobiography*, Stormfield edition, Vol. 36 (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1929), p. 172.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Pocket Books* (New York: Washington Square, 1960), p. 26. All further references are to this edition and enclosed in parentheses in the text.

¹⁶ Stuart P. Sherman, "Mark Twain," *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, ed. William Peterfield Trent, *et al.* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1921), III, 7.

¹⁷ Richard Bridgman, *The Colloquial Style in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 36, 37, 124.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31, 119-20, 124; Bellamy, p. 255.

¹⁹ See Twain's comments about the musical aspects of literature, pp. 2, 3-4.

²⁰ Bridgman, pp. 37, 126-29.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 129; Bellamy, title page; Wiggins, p. 11; Dixon Wecter, "Mark Twain," *Literary History of the United States*, ed. Robert E. Spiller, *et al.* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948), II, 939.

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THE SEVEN-YEAR-OLD, SECOND GRADER, AND WHAT TO EXPECT FROM HIM

The seven-year-old, second grader's personality and behavior can be described as a marvelous fabric, a growing fabric. We cannot see the underlying feltwork; but we can see the outward behavior patterns. These patterns have so much design and are so related to each other, that his mind is indeed comparable to a fabric which is richly woven and interwoven, an organic fabric that continues to grow, creating new patterns while it grows. The detailed makeup of his personality depends upon the interpersonal relationships which he experiences from day to day, from age to age.

The seven-year-old is too readily misunderstood, too easily imposed upon. He meets us, however, more than half way. He is susceptible to praise. He is sensitive to disapproval to the point of tears. Scolding and physical punishment are too gross for the tender tissue of his personality. His ethical sense is immature only because it is so recent; but in its processes, and even in its early patterns, it suggests sensitivities which he will experience again in the years of adolescence.

The importance of the school's role in the second grader's life would be difficult to overestimate. Not only does it strengthen some of the responses that the seven-year-old's parents are teaching him, it also teach-

es him many new responses. By teaching the second grader academic skills, by broadening his store of cultural information, and by giving him supervised practice in social relationships, it makes him better able to deal comfortably with the ever-widening range of problems that lie ahead of him on the road toward adulthood. Once the seven-year-old is in school, the school becomes for more than a decade the center of his world, occupying almost half of his waking hours.

The second grader's behavior at school will depend not only on factors in the school situation itself, but probably even more importantly on factors which make him a unique individual.

The typical seven-year-old sometimes seems too pulled in, too undaring, too withdrawn, too quiet and reserved. In his degree of reserve his lack of expansive drive toward the new, dangerous, and different, he reminds us a little of the quiet, close-to-home five-year-old — but in few other ways.¹

At no time is the seven-year-old completely his chronological age. He is a mixture of his past age, plus his present age, with foreshadowings of things to come. The growing pains change with time or take on different intensity or even hit different parts of the developing organism. Through living twelve months longer than the six-year-old; by having experienced more and more contact with the world and people; by having thought, having talked, and having played for a longer time, changes have occurred. He is not growing so fast as he did at six; he can even wear last year's clothing.²

There is a kind of quieting down at seven. The seven-year-old goes into lengthening periods of calmness and of self-absorption, during which he works his impressions over and over, oblivious to the outer world. It is an assimilative age; a time for salting down accumulated experiences, and for relating new experiences to the old.³

Identification begins early in life, and is a prolonged, perhaps life-long process. As a seven-year-old matures, he continues to identify with his parents, acquiring more of their characteristics. As his social world expands, he finds other identification models among his peers, teachers, ministers, and heroes from fiction, movies, and television; and he imitates their behavior, characteristics, and ideals. His personality, in the end, will thus be built upon the basis of a long series of identifications. It will be a complex and unique organization.⁴

Social relationships of the school years are more extensive, more intense, and more influential than those of the earlier years. The major social developments of this period reflect the seven-year-old's increased socialization, his more firmly established sex typing, and stronger social pressure to conform to group standards.⁵

During the first five years of life, the seven-year-old's parents are clear-

ly the primary influence on him, but in the second half decade of life, parental impacts may become diluted as peers, teachers, and the public media become more influential. Acceptance or rejection by peers contributes to the seven-year-old's self-image and self-esteem, and the values of the majority culture are transmitted, in large measure, by the peer group.

Seven is a pleasant age, if one respects the feelings of the second grader. His feelings need a new and even subtle regard because he is prone to lapse into musing moods during which he absorbs, revives, and reorganizes his experiences. Through his inner life, as well as through his outward conduct, he achieves his adjustments. We cannot do justice to the psychology of the seven-year-old unless we recognize the importance of his private mental activities. They account for his occasional brooding, his heedlessness, the minor strains of sadness and complaint, his sulks, his mutterings, his shynesses, and a certain pensiveness which is not without charm.

He takes in more than he gives out. In another year he will be comparatively expansive, projecting himself into the environment. Now he mulls things over in terms of their repercussions upon his personal self. He is a good guesser, and he sticks to his guesses.

The seven-year-old is forced to begin evaluating himself on the basis of his own skills and attributes, rather than on the basis of those parental traits that might be his particularly. Acceptance by peers depends primarily on what the child can offer — his talents, his assets, his skills. Acceptance must now be earned the hard way. The seven-year-old who has no skills is usually rejected quickly. When faced with an obstacle, stress, or threat, the seven-year-old can either withdraw from the anxiety-arousing situation, deny the threat, or avoid dealing with the unpleasant situation in some other way.⁶

It would appear important that the school try to avoid giving any second grader repeated and consistent feelings of failure. While he needs to be given realistic reminders of his deficiencies, this can be done without giving him the impression that he is a failure in all respects. The teacher who can accept in herself the fact that there are some things in which she herself is not particularly talented is in the best position to help the seven-year-old face his own assets and liabilities without becoming discouraged.⁷

The second grader's ability to solve problems efficiently, and to acquire knowledge is influenced not only by his achievement motivation, but also by his anxiety about intellectual activities. Many seven-year-olds have an unusually intense fear of failure; he doubts his ability to pass a test and to solve problems. This anxiety can be so intense that it obstructs clear thinking and causes him to withdraw interest from aca-

demic tasks.

Not all resistance to homework is due only to anticipation of failure, but fear of failure is one major determination of this reaction. The seven-year-old is developing a preferred defensive response to stress.⁸

In many ways the teacher's appearance and behavior are similar to those of the seven-year-old's mother; therefore, it is not unreasonable to assume that many second graders react to the teacher as though she were a substitute mother. The seven-year-old has a tendency to model his own values upon those of his teacher. School marks the separation from mother for a large part of the day. It also presents him with a new adult whom he must obey, and whose acceptance he may court. This new adult will require the seven-year-old to learn certain responses which are not inherently rewarding. The teacher is viewed as an authority figure who demands specific behaviors, and the second grader's success in school will depend on his readiness to adopt the responses that are required of him.⁹

The teacher plays an important part in the seven-year-old's adjustment. His joy is unending when his teacher smiles upon him. He brings her apples or flowers; he likes to be near her; he likes to touch her and to talk to her. He talks in order to establish a personal rapport. Boys are more apt to like their teacher, and may form a close attachment or develop crushes on her. Girls may dislike the teacher and complain, but not as much as when they were six-year-olds.¹⁰

As the seven-year-old enters the classroom he does not always pay attention to the teacher, he may be noisy and talkative as he makes his entrance, moving objects about the room; however, he is interested in a schedule and finally settles into classroom work with absorption.¹¹

In a study of the seven-year-old's preferences in teacher behavior, it was found that the second graders in our culture tend to prefer teachers who possess the following characteristics: kindness, cheerfulness, naturalness, fairness, impartiality, consistency, respectfulness, cleanliness, nice voice, and attractiveness. The teaching qualities the second grader likes are helpfulness, giving the children a democratic voice in class affairs, interest in their particular problems, and enthusiasm.¹²

The typical seven-year-old fatigues easily, but it seems to be more than fatigue which gives him such a negative feeling about people and things around him. The seven-year-old typically complains that his teacher doesn't like him and is mean to him, and that the other kids don't like him and are picking on him. The second grader's list of grievances tends to be long and comprehensive.¹³

At age seven he is usually able to pull himself together; he is in a sensitive phase which results in overtones and moods of sadness, and sometimes in broken-hearted sobs which come from within, often from wound-

ed sensitiveness. There is no doubt that he has problems of emotional organization, for he is variably sweet and good, or cross and tearful.

Sometimes the seven-year-old is not bold enough to try his strength against that of the teacher, and he becomes ornery at home. The swing of the pendulum of behavior from adjustment in one spot to rebellion in another indicates that the pressures squeezing him into shape are unequal. In extreme cases, the seven-year-old will play hooky or become truant, defying the authority of both home and school. Parents and teachers are frequently upset by this threat to their authority. It is only when the relationship between parents and the seven-year-old, or school and the second grader is unsatisfactory that the rebelliousness is a threat. The seven-year-old who feels loved is more eager to be good than to be bad, and to stand in high favor with his parents and teacher.¹⁴

A second grader does not play because he is too lazy to work. Often he puts forth his most strenuous energies in moments of play. Seven-year-olds who are capable of such intense play are most likely to give good accounts of themselves when they are grown up. Play is an outlet for obstructed and overflowing energy. The seven-year-old likes building things, likes magic and tricks, and enjoys putting jigsaw puzzles together. He likes to rig things from cereal boxes, play library, train, and post office. He collects and swaps cards, bottle tops, and bits of this and that.¹⁵

He feels life in every limb. He likes to climb trees, to scuff, tussle and tumble, to play cops and robbers, and commandoes, to roller skate, jump rope, play catch with a soft ball, or hop scotch. He is beginning to be interested in learning to bat and to pitch. Boys like to run and shoot airplanes through the air. They like to gallop, and to do a simple running step to music. Girls have a desire for dancing lessons. Boys have a beginning interest in chemistry, telegraphy, and navigation. Although the seven-year-old is interested in fairies, in supermen, and in tales of magic; he is beginning to manifest an almost scientific interest in causes and conditions.¹⁶

His group play is loosely organized, and individual ends are still the most prominent. He is beginning to be aware of his friends' attitudes and prefers older playmates. He is not a good loser. He tattletales if a playground situation grows too complex, and if things go badly. His tales are not lies or evasions of truth, but they are reflections of emotional needs: to be strong, brave, free, independent, powerful. This may be the last age when boys and girls play together, regardless of sex lines. There are strong and persistent boy-girl love affairs with the idea of marriage usually strong.¹⁷

The seven-year-old child is becoming aware of his own race, and he realizes that some of the other children are different. He understands the concept of Negro, and the Negro child as well as the white child,

shows a tendency to assign undesirable traits to the Negro. The Negro child appears to be identified with a group that the seven-year-old regards as possessing negative and undesirable traits. This type of anxiety-arousing identification is apt to make the Negro child feel insecure and resentful toward the white majority. The second grader acquires the prejudices of those with whom he identifies: parents, peers, and his social group.¹⁸

.....

The seven-year-old is a good listener. He likes to be read to, and he likes to hear a twice-told tale. He resents intrusions and feels ill at ease if he cannot bring his stories to a conclusion.¹⁹ He is a fair reader and enjoys reading by himself. He can get the sense of the story without knowing all of the words. The seven-year-old enjoys fairy tales even though he might be said to prefer his comic books. Boys especially are interested in army and navy stories, and books on airplanes, electricity, earth, and nature. Girls choose such books as *Heidi*, *The Story of a Baby* by Marie Ets or the A.A. Milne books.²⁰

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Pencils and erasers are almost a passion at seven. The second grader writes to erase. He manipulates and fingers objects, drops his pencil, jabs his pencil into his desk, and accumulates things in his desk. He still reverses some letters and numbers; but he usually recognizes his reversal and prefers to erase it. His pencil grasp is tight, and often held close to the point. The index finger is usually caved in, and as a rule, he exerts much pressure. He can now print several sentences with letters getting smaller toward the end of the line.

Pencil and paper work, although a strong interest, makes problems at this age. He may worry if he cannot finish his written work; and he even fears being kept after school if his paper is incomplete. He likes to have his paper corrected immediately. The seven-year-old prefers work at his desk to work presented by the teacher on the blackboard. He has trouble combining the two because he cannot copy from the blackboard. The second grader sets up too high of goals for himself. He wants to be perfect; and he brings home only his best papers. He is deeply concerned about, and even ashamed of, his mistakes. He may not take correction well and tries to cover up his errors with excuses.²¹

.....

As adults, we scarcely appreciate how much a seven-year-old still has to learn, not in factual knowledge, but in comprehension of the meanings of the varied-like situations which impinge upon him at school and at home. These meanings are essentially feelings. They do not emerge in definite patterns; they must be worked over and practiced through mental activity. This is growth process. Never forget how vast culture

is, and how innocent of its structure is the mood of the seven-year-old, second grader. He needs his moments of reflections as well as of action. Through his inner life as well as through his conduct he achieves his adjustments, and hopefully, becomes a happy, well-adjusted, seven-year-old, second grader.

NOTES

¹ Louise Bates Ames, Ph.D., *Is Your Child in the Wrong Grade?* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 50.

² Clara Lambert, "Understand Your Child from 6 to 12," *Public Affairs Pamphlet*, No. 144 (New York, 1967), p. 11.

³ Arnold Gesell, M.D. and Frances L. Ilg, M.D., *The Child from Five to Ten* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946), p. 131.

⁴ Paul H. Mussen, *The Psychological Development of the Child* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 74.

⁵ Mussen, p. 89.

⁶ Paul H. Mussen and John Janeway Conner, *Child Development and Personality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 359.

⁷ Mussen and Conger, p. 492.

⁸ Ibid., p. 360.

⁹ Ibid., p. 427.

¹⁰ Paul H. Mussen and Jerome Kagan, *Readings in Child Development and Personality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 326.

¹¹ George G. Thompson, *Child Psychology, Growth Trends in Psychological Adjustment* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962), p. 256.

¹² Mussen and Kagan, p. 492.

¹³ Ames, p. 279.

¹⁴ Lambert, p. 12.

¹⁵ Thompson, p. 360.

¹⁶ Gesell and Ilg, p. 137.

¹⁷ Mussen and Conger, p. 229.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 410.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 136.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 137.

²¹ Gesell and Ilg, p. 155.

—BARBARA J. DREINER

Barbara J. Dreiner lives at 707 Lakeside Street, LaPorte, is a housewife and part-time student at PNC. She is planning to specialize in elementary education. This article is a portion of her originally longer work.

OPEN CONTEST

First Prize Winner:

TO REIGN IS LONELY

Authority is often a burden which once picked up must be carried. In governing, one may lose his own freedom to do what he wants and feels. One must set the right example. This is especially true when dealing with

children. Often harder to bear than the burden itself, however, is the loneliness which comes with authority.

Just a few weeks ago, I realized this very thing while working in the sitter service at Purdue North Central. When I first asked to work with the children, I thought this would be my chance to spend more time with my little girl and perhaps relieve some of the guilt feelings I had from neglecting her to take a job. She was only two and a half then and could not know why her father had left and her mother was gone all day. So after school started, the sitter service seemed the perfect place for her while I attended classes and for me to work part time. This was my first experience in dealing with children other than my own, and I soon began to feel more like a wicked queen than the big playmate I had wanted to be.

My kingdom, so to speak, exists within the walls of Room 119, a converted classroom. Here I sit at my throne, an oak chair, not unlike those in all the other rooms, in front of a large rickety table. One can see that the nursery room wall decorations and the large mobile hanging from the ceiling are fine attempts to make the room inviting to children. Many kinds of battles are fought here each day, and I must decide which of my small subjects shall receive praise and which must be punished and when. Making my job harder is the welcomed presence of my own daughter, Heather. This day will be different, for I am to realize that I am being victimized by these budding elves. They have unwittingly made me a dictator against my will.

Upon entering the room, I see John, who is six, sitting in the center of the tattered rust-colored rug. His legs are the fortress walls protecting a magnificent building of wooden blocks. There is a sneer on his impish face as he growls a warning not to knock over his building. This is, of course, exactly what the other children want to do. A boy and a girl, both on plastic riding horses, ride close to the building in an effort to torment John. He shouts his own kind of curses after them. At first I take his part and tell the children to leave him alone, but even as they find other interests he still insults them. It is evident that he wants them to try to destroy his buildings. When most of them ignore him, he starts deliberately to bait Heather. "Heather, you're a cry baby. Heather, you're a bad girl." I've always told the children this is a bad thing to say. Perhaps this is why it upsets Heather so much. She drops her toy and approaches John, her face showing anger only a three-year-old is capable of. Her small fists are clenched, and I can see I'd better do something fast; but before I can interfere, she is shouting that she is a good girl. Next there are brightly colored blocks flying through the air. John's precious building is rubble. I pull Heather away from her attack on the older boy. John looks at me expectantly, and Heather begins crying loudly. I see he is

actually glad he's got someone in trouble, and lo, it is the princess herself. They all watch, I suspect, with glee, the little demons. They know what the punishment is for an act of violence. Even Heather knows what's coming. I have to condemn my own child. Because she is my child I can't appear to be partial. I really feel she had every right to defend herself in the only way she knows, but the rules forbid hitting. The younger children don't understand what John was doing. They only know Heather knocked down the blocks and hit John. If she were one of the other children, a little talk might have sufficed. Since it's Heather the full punishment has to be dealt if only to make her life more bearable in my absence. So, taking her hand, I lead her off to the corner while she pleads with tear-filled eyes, "Mommy, I'm not a bad girl. I'm a good girl." I could see in those eyes she didn't understand why I was being so cruel and unfair. Why didn't I comfort her, and why did I let John say those things about her? There is no way to explain to her or to the others. They must watch and see that hitting isn't allowed even if someone says terrible things about them. What of John? He hadn't hit anyone, but he had made them all feel bad. If I put him in the corner they would be confused. So only Heather must pay for her actions.

The corner is not just where two walls meet but a horrible place of loneliness. Heather must endure the accusing stares of the others and watch them begin to play with the toys that only a moment ago were hers and so precious. Worst of all is Mommy. The only parent she knows, the center of her life, has not only executed the punishment but now ignores her misery and continues her attention toward the others.

Heather has now shrunk into a tiny ball which trembles in spasms of grief; and still the pleading blue eyes, afloat in oceans of tears, search for some hope, some hint that Mother still remembers the pitiful little creature isolated in the dark corner of punishment. Time seems interminable. It's only been five minutes. There must be another five minutes before the sentence is served. Meanwhile, I have a talk with John, explaining that he is not to tease the younger children because it upsets them. I tell him I know he is a good boy and will do his best to help me keep all the children happy. Hopefully, we have reached an understanding. Heather is watching me, and I think she feels I'm giving comfort to her tormentor. My words and smiles are for the others with only an occasional unconcerned glance for her.

The ten minutes are finally up, and she is sitting quietly nursing her broken heart which shows plainly on her face. She sniffs, and one more tear trickles down her wet little face. The lower lip is set in a pout. The small creature huddles in despair. The sight is crushing. I want so much to pick her up, kiss her, and make her smile. Instead I must mask my emotions. My voice is flat and mechanical when I ask if she wants to come

out of the corner. I hear a tiny hurt answer, and then I grant her freedom. An instant change takes place over her. The listless body is again animate. She springs from the corner, and I see the happy grin radiating from her still wet face. She runs to me, her dark curls bouncing, and her feet almost tripping, while gleeful cries of, "Mommy, Mommy," fill my ears and my heart. She is suddenly in my arms kissing and hugging me and mispronouncing, "Mommy, I luck you." At last, I'm free to return her affection because she is now doing something positive.

While I was dealing out the punishment, I was not free to do as I felt. I had to remain steadfast and do what was expected of me, for if I didn't follow through with my own orders I would have lost control and respect of the children. No adult can do this in front of a child and expect that child to respect authority. If he does not respect the authority of adults, he will not believe what they say. If I should let this happen, it would not only make my present situation very unhappy but make things difficult for the teachers who will someday attempt to teach these children. No, I cannot be just a pal to these children. I am set apart from them all. I must rule, and at times, it is a very lonely reign indeed.

—ALISON HINDMAN

Originally from Knox, Alison Hindman presently lives with her child at R.R. #3, LaPorte. She is a full-time student and freshman at PNC in the School of General Studies.

Second Price Winner:

A CARNIVOROUS CREATURE

When she returned from the beauty parlor, she went straight to her bedroom. One entire wall was mirrored. She looked at herself and smiled. She always smiled when she saw her reflection. She thought how nice it was to have the room all to herself. When she and Hank moved into the new apartment, she had convinced him that separate bedrooms was a sensible idea. He was up late so many nights working. He usually woke her up getting into bed, and then he tossed and turned the rest of the night. He finally agreed that he was being selfish and allowed her to have her own room. He visited her, of course, about once a week, which she found very annoying. She liked sleeping alone, and sleeping with Hank was so uncomfortable:

Her room was like a sacred oasis dedicated to her beauty. On her dressing table were bottles and jars of all shapes and sizes. Short, squat bottles that promised the ageless beauty of Cleopatra, tall, thin bottles for the allure of Raquel Welsh, square, round and octagonal jars guaranteed to produce the skin of a baby — all awaited her command. Like sentries

constantly on duty, they guarded and protected her from flaws. Her closet was filled with all the latest fashions. Each was carefully selected to enhance the color of her eyes, to capture the lustre of her hair, to compliment the curves of her body.

She changed into a gold lamé evening dress for the dinner party at the country club. She admired the final results in the mirror.

"Yes," she thought, "I do look good, but why shouldn't I? I'm always careful. I never eat or drink too much. I hate to think what I'd look like now, if I had given into those foolish ideas of Hank's. Thank God, he doesn't bother me about them any more."

Hank and Marsha had been married for six years, for the first two years he had wanted to move to the country and raise a family. She always found reasons that made it impossible. Now he didn't mention it any more.

She went into the living room to await Hank's arrival. She curled up in a big, soft, over-stuffed chair and listened to the crackling hiss of the fireplace. As she watched the flames do their pagan dance on the log, her mind returned to the past and her first husband. She still couldn't understand why he had left. He was only a bank teller when they were first married. She had made the right friends and entertained the right people. She had shown him how to dress and helped him to improve his personality. Through her help and guidance, he was on his way up. The next stop was the vice-presidency of the bank. One night, he just walked out on her. She never saw him again.

The click of the key in the lock brought her back to the present, Hank was home.

"Good evening, darling," she greeted him. "you have about an hour to get ready for the party."

"Damn it, Marsha, I'm too tired. I've been feeling lousy all day, and I just want to relax."

"Now, Hank, you know we have to go. It's very important. Your boss will be there, and you do want that promotion, don't you? I'll fix you a drink." His hand trembled as he raised the glass to his lips. She picked out his suit, shirt, and tie and laid them on his bed. When he had finished dressing, they left the apartment. As they reached the lobby of the building, she remembered the gold earrings she had wanted to wear. She asked Hank if he would run back upstairs and get them for her.

"Marsha, you look beautiful without them. Are they really necessary?"

"Please, darling. They go so well with this dress, and I did want to wear them."

She waited for him in the lobby. As he was returning, she spotted him at the top of the stairs. His face was red, and he was gasping for air. When he reached the bottom stair he clutched at his chest and fell to the floor.

Marsha rushed to him. The mask of death had covered his face. A tear escaped from each of Marsha's eyes and cautiously made their way down her cheeks like weary travelers in a strange land. She looked so frightfully drab in black.

—BONNIE SULLIVAN

Originally from Chicago, Bonnie Sullivan is a housewife and lives at Box #609, LaPorte. She is enrolled at PNC in HSSE and is an English major.

CHANGE

And the seventh great glacier
Moved
Silently
Out of the north
Scooping out Michigan Lake
And leveling Indiana hills.
Silted valleys, swamps, meadows.
Great forests. Cut, drawn, aching.
Ended at wrinkled Andersonville.
Was it finished?
Or did it meet
Irresistible nature?

Faces, one each.
Born with one.
Making one.
Formed
Through circumstance
Or will?
Does this face show
A satisfying work?
Unsettling distractions?
Or broken
By overwhelming odds?

—PAT GUDEMAN

Pat Gudeman, housewife and mother of six children, lives at 305 Heaton Street, Knox. She enrolled as a part-time student at PNC in 1971 and is now a sophomore and English major. A three-award winner, Pat was also an award-winning contributor to last year's *Portals*.

FEAR KNOWS NO MERCY

*Is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood?
Pythagoras was misunderstood, and
Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and
Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton,
and every pure and wise spirit that
ever took flesh.¹*

This was Captain Weirdlove's fifth flight from Mars to Pluto in the new test saucer, Moonbeam VII. His flight crew consisted of Dr. Bonafide Idiot of science lab *If*, Flight Specialist Professor Incurrigible Moron, and Flight Navigator Dr. Perfect Imbecile. Their mission: an effort to strengthen and stimulate their embryonic economy; bring back as many Plutonians as possible.

Take off time, O-Zoom-Zoom hundred hours, from *If* Space Force Base was typical of Martian efficiency, smooth. Flight Navigator Dr. Perfect Imbecile, who had been sniffing Angel Dust, was suffering from increasingly dangerous side effects: hallucinations. Captain Weirdlove set the Moonbeam VII on automatic control, drank some tranquillizing crater ash, and settled back in his air seat for what he thought to be an uneventful trip to Pluto. Flight Specialist Professor Moron was casually checking his flight plan for possible flaw. But, as usual, he found no mistakes and settled behind the instrument panel to read Loose Martian, the latest edition of Angel pornography. Dr. Idiot was busy checking the restraining quarters for the Plutonians to be captured.

Perfect Imbecile, still suffering from recurring effects of the Jovean Angel dust, in a final check of navigation equipment, accidentally set Moonbeam VII on a collision course with Earth and, satisfied, gave himself over to the powers of the dust potent. Because of its obviously polluted atmosphere, earth was considered void of any and all conceivable forms of life. There wasn't a conscious soul aboard Moonbeam VII except Flight Specialist Incurrigible Moron who, sweat dripping from his forehead, was engrossed in the details of an exposed Angel Wing.

Several hundred Zoom-Zooms later Captain Weirdlove, irritated by a persistent crater fly, woke up, and instantly comprehending their plight, worked frantically at the control panel as he looked into the rapidly approaching, what was to be defined several weeks later while he lay helplessly shackled to a bed and heavily-guarded in Billings Hospital, The John Hancock Building. Captain Weirdlove and his entire crew except Flight Navigator Dr. Perfect Imbecile survived the catastrophe.

As a result of the crash, millions of unfortunate people were killed.

Pictures of the strange invaders from outer space were flashed across the world. Fear gripped everyone. All the major military powers of the world banded together in decided preparation for an all-out invasion from outer space. Difference took a holiday. In a constipated effort to communicate with the Martians, Billings Hospital was filled with military force and diplomats from all over the world. Not understanding the organic functions of the Martians' bodies, teams of doctors and specialists were unable to save Dr. Idiot and Professor Moron, who disintegrated moments after their deaths. Desperation closed the circle. The President of the United States intensified all efforts to communicate with Captain Weirdlove, but to no avail. Weirdlove, equally desperate, screamed incoherently and gestured frantically, which only increased the mounting fear of everyone involved.

On August 24, 1998, Captain Weirdlove was taken to trial. He was tried and convicted of Invasion of Air Rights, Reckless Homicide, and Resisting Arrest: he was sentenced to death. On August 28, 1998, Captain Weirdlove was chained to the floor of a self-destructing space capsule and launched into outer space.

His only crime, if indeed it be a crime, was simply one of being misunderstood.

—NATHANIEL WILLIAMS

Nathaniel Williams is a second semester student at PNC and is presently enrolled in the School of General Studies. He lives in Beverly Shores and plans to major in English.

¹ Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Self Reliance*.

A CHILD'S DECISION

Logan, Utah, was a small, agricultural community in the early 1940's. The people worked hard, lived simply, and most of their social activity revolved around the Mormon Church. Services were held twice on Sunday, the young people had Mutual meetings Tuesday evenings, and there were frequent dances and suppers. The proper name for the church is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, but people in and out of the church use the term "Mormon" unless they are being formal.

Our family was not truly Mormon. My father had been brought up within the faith, but he did not live according to its principles. Two sisters had been baptized, two of us had not. Mother just lived her religion by being a kind and compassionate woman.

I attended the Sunday services and the Tuesday night Mutual Meeting for years mainly because there was nothing better to do. I had never joined the church, though; I didn't share its beliefs, and there had been

no pressure to make me join. Regular baptism is conducted at eight years of age and is, consequently, a parental decision. Our parents had agreed to let the children make their own religious decisions.

The summer I was twelve, Mrs. Hemsley was our Mutual teacher. I really liked her — she was a fat, jolly woman who always had time to listen to us, and she seemed to be interested in our thoughts and feelings. She decided our summer project would be to perform baptisms for the dead. If the whole class participated, our reward would be a trip to Salt Lake City to visit the temple and the tabernacle.

Baptism for the dead is part of the Mormon faith. A child is baptized in the temple in the name of a dead person to make them members of the church or to seal a man and woman together for life in the hereafter. Frequently, a man is sealed to many women. Although polygamous marriages were banned by the United States government in 1862 and by the Church in 1890, Mormons believe that life in heaven is polygamous. Geneological research is an integral part of Mormonism; research enables members to have their ancestors baptized into the faith. This is important to them because only Mormons have the chance to reside in the celestial level of heaven.

Not being a Mormon I could not enter the temple or perform baptisms. That was fine with me, but there was another problem. No baptisms, no trip, and I desperately wanted to go on the trip. I can't remember discussing this with anyone; but somehow I came to the conclusion that I would join the church and be included in the group. No questions were asked about believing, so the arrangements were made, and I was baptized.

That summer I spent several Saturday afternoons at the temple performing baptisms and sealings for the dead. These are done in a beautiful, big round tub which stands on four golden oxen. There are two elders of the church in the tub with you; the names and ritual are said, and the elders immerse you in the water. The amount of baptisms or sealings a child did would vary; it might be a few one day, and thirty or forty on another day.

After one of these sessions I would feel uncomfortable and depressed, and hoped I wouldn't have to go again. I did go on five Saturdays, though, and never admitted to myself that it was repugnant. The trip was too important to allow any doubt to enter my mind.

At the end of summer we had done about five hundred baptisms. Mrs. Hemsley was very proud of us, and she announced that in two weeks we would collect our reward. The day arrived and off we went on the train, eight young girls, Mrs. Hemsley, and her grown-up daughter, Jean. We spent the morning touring the tabernacle and the home of Brigham Young, the man who led the Mormons to Utah. The temple was closed

for repairs which was a big disappointment.

I remember starting the day with a heavy feeling in my stomach, and it got worse as the day went on. This seems to be my reaction to any emotion; I used to think it was the location of my soul. Lunch at the Hotel Utah only increased the heaviness, and during our trip to the biggest store in town, the church-owned ZCMI, lunch decided to come back up. For me, getting on the train and returning home was the best part of the day.

The next day was Sunday. As usual, I got up and got ready for church. The church was six or seven blocks from our house, and on my way there I suddenly realized I simply could not go. Because of my shame as to my motives the trip had been ruined; further participation in church activities would also be shameful. I returned home that morning, and never went to church again or participated in any of its activities.

The first feeling of self-contempt is a painful experience, and the memory lingers a long time. This experience did not make me wise enough to avoid wrong decisions, but it taught me to question my motives and to decide if what I wanted was worth the price I've always had to pay.

—VIOLET VOJAK

Violet Vojak lives at 2309 Florimond Avenue, Michigan City, is married and has one child. She is a part-time student at PNC and is in her first year of nurse's training. Her essay first appeared in the student newspaper, *The North Central Observer*.

THE PAUSE

At the time of growth between what was and what will be, there must be a recognizable time of transition, a time of rest between the breakup of the old self and the formation of the new self, the personality, the entity, the mode of behavior. As a person comes to some change in his life-state or life habits, there must be a pause or retreat or vacation to allow the process to go forward. In nature, in literature, in the lives of men, we see this process. There is a meaningful pause between two segments in life, the one built upon the other.

When a lower-form animal, such as an insect with an exoskeleton, outgrows that covering, the outside skeleton splits and the insect emerges. For a time the insect is very soft and vulnerable, and often dies. If the insect lives, a new covering is formed. This time the covering is bigger, and again the insect has an exoskeleton to grow into. His former self has experienced growth, and his covering has been discarded. In this pause there is reformation. Now, in a sense, he is a new animal, for he had to split his skeleton and step out of it; then he had to pause, vulnerable,

while a new skeleton was formed. The pause is necessary to achieve an advanced stage of development. This phenomenon serves as a useful parallel to man's spiritual or intellectual growth.

Many have wondered why Prince Hamlet in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* does not seize his reins of power and get his job of first importance done. Clearly a wrong has been committed and an interloper has seized the kingship. What about ridding the country of him? Hamlet, however, has other than physical problems of removal. He is besieged by doubts caused by the wish-fantasy of his own childhood. It remains repressed. We learn of its existence only through the inhibitory effects which come from it. Goethe was the first to perceive that Hamlet represented the type of man whose cutting edge of mind and energy-flow were paralyzed by excessive intellectual activity: "Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

We see Hamlet capable of some action, however. We see him in an outburst of rage mistakenly kill the eavesdropper, and we see him deliberately send two courtiers to a death intended for him. Why, then, does he not get on with the task his father's ghost has given him? What inhibits him and produces this spectacular pause? Hamlet is able to function in many ways, but he cannot take revenge upon the man who did away with his father and has taken the father's place, sexually, with the mother. Upon the prince this man brings to bear Hamlet's own repressed desires of his childhood. The whole play is conceived to present Hamlet's lack of resolution to accomplish the task of revenge assigned him, according to Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Thus, the dislike which should have driven Hamlet to a speedy and decisive revenge is replaced by self-loathing. He knows that he, himself, is no better than the murderer whom he is driven to punish. All this remains unconscious in the mind of Hamlet; but it puts him in a pause between the man he was, and is no longer, and the man he will be. He is no longer the princeling untried in his power. To become the man he wants to be, a man of action must accept the challenge now flung at him. Hamlet pauses while he formulates his resolution. The pause, thus, is not only useful but necessary in growth toward a higher plateau of being.

At age forty-seven John Donne was overworked and overwrought. When he was forty-four he had, at last, received his long-awaited appointment to court. But, Ann, his wife, had died when Donne was forty-five leaving him with seven children. While living, Ann had shared with Donne his successes and failures as well as his ardent love. Since her death he had become lonely, morose, and convinced that he was doomed to a death from consumption. Donne felt as he wrote "A Hymn to Christ" that God's eyes were turned away from him.

King James became aware of the ill health of Donne. He arranged that Donne accompany Doncaster on a mission of inquiry to Bohemia. Al-

though political business was uppermost in the design of the journey, the king hoped the change and relaxation would restore Donne's strength and good spirits. Donne was neither a secretary nor the principal chaplain. He delivered an occasional sermon. This was the pause, the break in routine, that Donne needed. Here he rested from his courtly, his churchly, and his familial responsibilities. It became a long tour — prolonged far beyond its original intention. Brussels, Cologne, Frankfort, Vienna, the Tyrol, Nuremburg, The Hague were some of its landmarks. The trip lasted eight months and cost England 80,000 pounds. The real mission of the embassy, political integration, failed. Donne, however, was regenerated. He went back to resume his courtly career, his church offices, and his duties as a father of a large family. Again his intellectual vivacity and wit revealed themselves. Again his writing became powerful. Again every word rang with his voice; every line revealed his unique expression. From a severe depression he had been regenerated through a pause, a break in routine, a vacation.

Perhaps one's student days are remembered with pain and with affection partly because this is a stage of growth and pause. The psyche of the student begins to take on the coloration of the future, what he will be, because of the helping influence of the truly dedicated teacher. "Men may rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things," says Tennyson. The student is a somewhat vulnerable mass of bones of his former self being fleshed out toward a new being under the influence of learning personified in the interested professor. This is not exactly a rest, a stopping. There is burgeoning growth. It is a pause, however, in that the inward growth is not noticeable until later when the student is a contributor to society. By then, he has gone on to assume the identity of his new self following his learning pause.

When we observe the pause between two stages of life in nature, in literature, in the lives of men, it may look quiescent. Perhaps it appears as though nothing is happening. But the outside influences of the past and present as well as the individual's own chemistry are contributing the revitalized being of the future. As a result of this accumulation or assimilation, he may feel born anew.

—PAT GUDEMAN

AN INTERPRETATION OF HOPKINS "PIED BEAUTY"

Essentially "Pied Beauty" is a hymn of praise to the creator of all natural beauty. Hopkins begins and ends the poem praising God. What lies between the opening praise and the closing one is a description of the universe as a total harmony of pied beauty, the unifying chord, which Hopkins uses to praise God its creator.

Within the lines of "Pied Beauty" Gerard Manley Hopkins has combined a variety of praises into a poetic hymn. Hopkins, who was aware of God's presence as revealed in natural beauty, sings his hallelujahs, not in religious terminology which might be expected of a Jesuit Priest, but in terms of a naturalist. He thanks God for the varied degrees of beauty: the many colored skies, the flecked and streaked cows, the spotted trout, the glowing chestnuts, the colorful finches' wings, and for the patchwork of green, yellow, and brown fields which dot the landscape. He is also thankful for the ship whose variously colored gear, tackle, and trim flutter in the breeze as they sail off upon the trade winds. Having encompassed the whole universe — the air and/or the heavens, the land, the oceans, and the fires of hell — Hopkins can still find things for which he is grateful. In the concluding lines he thanks God for all the things of which we are aware only in relation to their opposites, for the uniqueness of each individual thing, and for the varying degrees of the use of a given quality so that the sparing use of the same quality makes us appreciate even more its abundant use. Thank you, God, says Hopkins, for those things which are so beautifully different that they seem strange. Thank you for all things which change quickly be they fickle, freckled, or who knows how many different ways they change. Thank you for the swift as opposed to the slow, the sweet which we know only in relation to the sour, and for the dazzle of one star as compared to the dimness of another. Thank you, God, the father of all beauty and the one whose beauty knows no change, continues Hopkins. And then the compelling tone of the Jesuit Priest asserts itself as he ends his hymn of glorification with a final "Praise him."

The concept of beauty through variation is reflected in the elements of style used in this poetic hymn. Hopkins often used hyphenated words for multifariousness. In lines 2, 3, 4, 10 he uses them to join together and give new meaning to old words. *Couple-Colour* is not only a coupling of color but also a harmony of color due to the musical blend of the cacophonous sounds of the C's and P and the euphonious tone of the L. A similar harmony is present in the melodic quality of the F's and L's and the concentrated meaning found in *Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls* in line four. Multiplicity of sound and word sense also appear in line ten where the creator *fathers-forth* beauty. The F's merged with the mellifluous TH's are musical accompaniment for this compound word which Hopkins uses as emphasis, through understatement, in lieu of creator. Diversity is apparent in the sound devices Hopkins employed. He uses alliteration, consonance, assonance, internal rime, and end rime in *Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls* to create an image. The resonance of the long vowels and the consonants prolong the speaking of these words, thus producing an image of the radiating light of a red-hot fire and the glowing

chestnuts. Long O's, short A's and short I's are coupled with the alliterative T in line six to form another image, the breeze fluttering in the taut sails of the boat. These many varieties of sound are combined in a symphony of poetic praise for the creator of all piedness.

Reinforcing the overall picture of pied beauty while adding variety to the poetic devices is Hopkins' use of onomatopoeic words: *freckled*, *stipple*, *sweet*, *sour*, *dappled*, *plough*, *brinded*, *adazzle* and *dim* echo the sense the poet is expressing. The rise and fall of the voice as the word *plough* is spoken is reminiscent of the earth as it rolls up and out of the furrow. The puckering of the mouth when saying the word *sour* and the cacophonous sounds of *stipple*, which echoes the sound of the brush as it dots the canvas with color, demonstrate the author's art in the use of words. The author's choice of words works well with the general scheme of the poem. His selection of words like *swift*, *slow*; *sweet*, *sour*; *adazzle*, *dim* whose similarity in sound is countered by their opposed meanings reveals another example of the differences the author presses into service to support his thesis.

The rhythm in the poem, like the sound, is varied. Hopkins, originator of sprung rhythm, used it throughout this work. It is especially appropriate for this hymn of praise because its rhythm is patterned after musical concepts. For the most part, the meter is pentameter with hexameter and monometer used for variety. Diversity in meter within the poem corresponds to the diversity in beauty which is being expressed. Additional emphasis is achieved in this poetic song of praise by Hopkins' utilization of the perfect spondee monometer, one metrical foot, to denote praise for the one and only originator of all beauty.

Structurally Hopkins employed variety, too. A variance in the appearance of the lines as they are arranged on the page is apparent. An indentation pattern is immediately detectable. It has no relationship, however, to the length of the line. Thus, the similarities, indentations, and differences, length of lines, exist visually within the structure of the poem just as they did within the universe Hopkins is describing in *Pied Beauty*.

Another difference in the poem is its form. Although it is printed in continuous form, its division in thought indicates the construction is a variation of the Petrarchan sonnet form. The first six lines, which are an extended simile, being equivalent to the octet and the last five lines serving as a sestet. The *abc, abc, dbc, dc* rime scheme also conforms to the author's thesis. This variation from the standard Petrarchan rime scheme illustrates Hopkins' poetic manipulations to underscore the concept of pied beauty. The progression in the poem moves from general or plurals: *dappled things*, *couple-colour skies*, *rose-moles on trout* (a synecdoche since one trout represents all trout), *chestnut-falls*, etc., in the first sec-

tion to singular or specifics in the closing lines. Adding further to the thesis of piedness is the development of the first section in parallels: *Couple-coloured* skies like a *brinded* cow, as opposed to a development of contrasts: *swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim* in the last section.

Like God, the creator of a harmonious multiplicity of universal beauty, Hopkins has created a harmonious multiplicity of beauty too. As scientific discoveries indicate, we have much to learn about the harmony which exists in nature. Likewise, Hopkins' *Pied Beauty* has many additional but carefully planned examples of complex harmony similar to those found in nature. It is through this pattern of complexity that Hopkins achieves the ultimate in a hymn of praise for the eternal God. Because of the continued discovery of other elements in the poetic network of this poem, which illustrate the concept of piedness, the thoughts it contain become eternal also. Consequently, for an eternity Hopkins' hymn will continue to echo praise for the creator of pied beauty.

—MARILYN DODRILL

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH: John Niemann, 905 Tryon Road, Michigan City, took this picture of the Lee R. Seymour residence on Goldring Road near LaPorte. Mr. Niemann's special photographic interests are architecture, nature, and portraits. (Nikkormat FT, 50mm f 1.4 lens; f4 at 1/60th, Plus-X film SAE 125.)

